



Dodge County Traffic Safety Commission
124 West St. Juneau, WI 53039

Joel Kiesow, Coordinator
Capt. Trace Frost, Dep. Coordinator

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Press Release: FOURTH OF JULY 2016

This Fourth of July, There's No Excuse—
Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over

By: Dodge County Highway Safety Commission

Every year Americans head out on our nation's highways to celebrate the Fourth of July at picnics, parties, parades and more. Unfortunately, for many, the celebrating includes drinking alcohol, which too often leads to drunk driving on one of the most heavily traveled holidays of the year.

There were 397 people killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2014 over the Fourth of July holiday (6 p.m. July 3rd to 5:59 a.m. July 7th). Of those fatalities, 164 people (41%) were killed in crashes involving a driver or motorcycle operator with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or higher.

In 2014, 9,967 people were killed in drunk-driving crashes nationwide—almost a third of all crash fatalities. Also, from 2010-2014, 39 percent of all traffic fatalities over the Fourth of July period occurred in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes.

This Fourth of July, the Dodge County Sheriff's Department and local law enforcement will be out in full force, arresting drunk drivers who put lives in danger.

“Don’t even think about drinking and driving this Fourth of July, or you will be arrested,” said Joel Kiesow Dodge County Highway Safety Coordinator. “The ‘Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over’ campaign means zero tolerance for drunk driving—no excuses.”

Motorcycle operators are overrepresented as the highest percentage of alcohol-impaired drivers in fatal crashes. In 2014, more than a quarter (29%) of motorcycle operators in fatal crashes had BACs of .08 or higher.

Drunk drivers are more common at night. Over the July Fourth holiday in 2014, more than two-fifths (42%) of the drivers in nighttime (6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.) fatal crashes were alcohol-impaired, compared to 12 percent of drivers in fatal crashes during the day.

If you’re caught driving drunk this Independence Day, you will be arrested. The consequences of drunk driving are that serious. Not only could you put your life and the lives of others at risk, but a DUI arrest means a loss of freedom and money, including going to jail, losing your license, and paying steep financial expenses. The average DUI costs about \$10,000.

“This Fourth of July, don’t risk losing your life or your independence by drinking and driving. Help make everyone’s holiday in Dodge County safer by driving sober, said Kiesow. “Remember, there’s no excuse—Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over.”

The Dodge County Highway Safety Commission recommends these safe alternatives to drinking and driving.

- Plan a safe way home before the fun begins.
- Designate a sober driver or use public transportation to get home safely.
- Use your community’s sober ride program
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, don’t hesitate to contact [Local Law Enforcement].
- If you know people who are about to drive or ride after drinking, take their keys and help them make other arrangements to get to where they are going safely.